

REMARKS

In the non-final Office Action, the Examiner objected to claim 21 for minor informalities; rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Jantzen (WO 98/59464); rejected claims 16 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Magee (U.S. Patent No. 6,002,687); rejected claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Ishibashi (U.S. Patent No. 5,663,949); rejected claims 10 and 12-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Furuichi (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0024928); rejected claims 19-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Ishibashi in view of Allen (U.S. Patent No. 6,868,082); and objected to claims 4-9 and 11 as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but which would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this Amendment, Applicant amends claims 1, 5, 7, 9, 10, 15, 16, 18, and 21 to improve form, and cancels claims 8 and 11, without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-7, 9, 10, and 12-21 remain pending.

At page 2, paragraph 1 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claim 21 for minor informalities. Applicant amends claim 21 to address the objection. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection to claim 21.

At page 2, paragraph 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Jantzen. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

While not acquiescing in the Examiner's rejection, but simply to expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended claim independent claim 1 to include features identified as allowable by the Examiner in paragraph 9 of the Office Action. Thus, Applicant submits that claim 1 is not

anticipated by Jantzen. Claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1 and are, therefore, not anticipated by Jantzen for at least the reasons given with respect to claim 1.

In paragraph 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 16 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Magee. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

While not acquiescing in the Examiner's rejection, but simply to expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended independent claim 16 to include features similar to features identified as allowable by the Examiner in paragraph 9 of the Office Action. Thus, Applicant submits that amended claim 16 is not anticipated by Magee. Claim 17 depends from claim 16 and is, therefore, not anticipated by Magee for at least the reasons given with respect to claim 16.

In paragraph 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Ishibashi. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

While not acquiescing in the Examiner's rejection, but simply to expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended independent 18 to include features similar to features identified as allowable by the Examiner in paragraph 9 of the Office Action. Thus, Applicant submits that amended claim 18 is not anticipated by Ishibashi.

In paragraph 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 10 and 12-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by Furuichi. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

While not acquiescing in the Examiner's rejection, but simply to expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended independent claims 10 and 15 to include features similar to features identified as allowable by the Examiner in paragraph 9 of the Office Action. Thus, Applicant submits that amended claims 10 and 15 are not anticipated by Furuichi. Claims 12-14 depend

from claim 10 and are, therefore, not anticipated by Furuichi for at least reasons given with respect to claim 10.

In paragraph 8, the Examiner rejected claims 19-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Ishibashi in view of Allen. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Claims 19-21 depend from claim 18. The disclosure of Allen does not cure the deficiencies in the disclosure of Ishibashi identified above with respect to claim 18. Therefore, claims 19-21 are patentable over Ishibashi and Allen, whether taken alone or in any reasonable combination, for at least reasons given with respect to claim 18.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner's reconsideration of this application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1070 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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